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› September 2023

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Industrial Disputes, Australia

The number of disputes (strikes or lockouts), employees involved and working days lost; cause of dispute; duration; and the reason work resumed

Reference period September 2023

Released 14/12/2023

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Key statistics

In the September quarter 2023:

- 67 disputes occurred.
- 18,800 employees were involved and 37,100 working days lost.
- disputes occurred in 8 industries and in 8 states and territories.

During the year ended September 2023, there were 211 disputes and a total of 76,100 working days lost.

Key statistics

	Quarter	Year ended		
	Jun Quarter 2023	Sep Quarter 2023	Sep Quarter 2022	Sep Quarter 2023
Number of disputes (no.)				
New	57	53	164	196
Total	71	67	182	211
Employees involved (‘000)				
New	9.6	17.4	153.2	49.4
Total	10.5	18.8	159.8	52.7
Working days lost (‘000)	10.2	37.1	244.2	76.1

Overview

In the September quarter 2023, there were:

- 67 disputes, 4 less than the previous quarter.
- 18,800 employees involved, an increase from 10,500 in the previous quarter.
- 37,100 working days lost, an increase from 10,200 in the previous quarter.

Year ended estimates:

- 211 disputes occurred, 29 more than in the previous year.
- 76,100 working days were lost, 168,100 less than in the previous year.

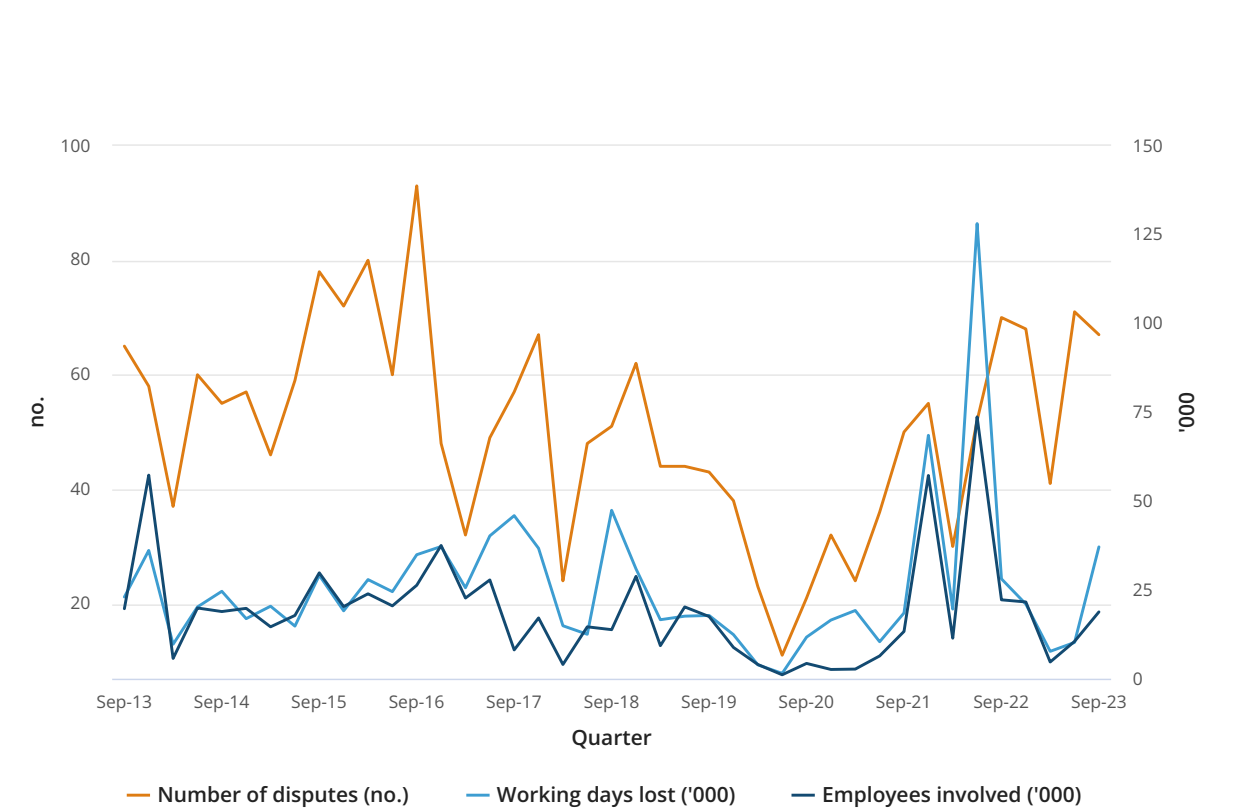
Industrial Disputes which occurred during the quarter

	Number of disputes		Employees involved		Working days lost
	New (no.)	Total (no.)	New ('000)	Total ('000)	('000)
September Quarter 2021	39	50	11.7	13.3	18.5
December Quarter 2021	37	55	50.6	57.2	68.5
March Quarter 2022	22	30	10.1	11.4	19.6
June Quarter 2022	45	52	71.2	73.7	128.1
September Quarter 2022	60	70	21.2	22.2	28.1
December Quarter 2022	53	68	18.4	21.6	21.0
March Quarter 2023	33	41	4.1	4.7	7.7
June Quarter 2023	57	71	9.6	10.5	10.2
September Quarter 2023	53	67	17.4	18.8	37.1

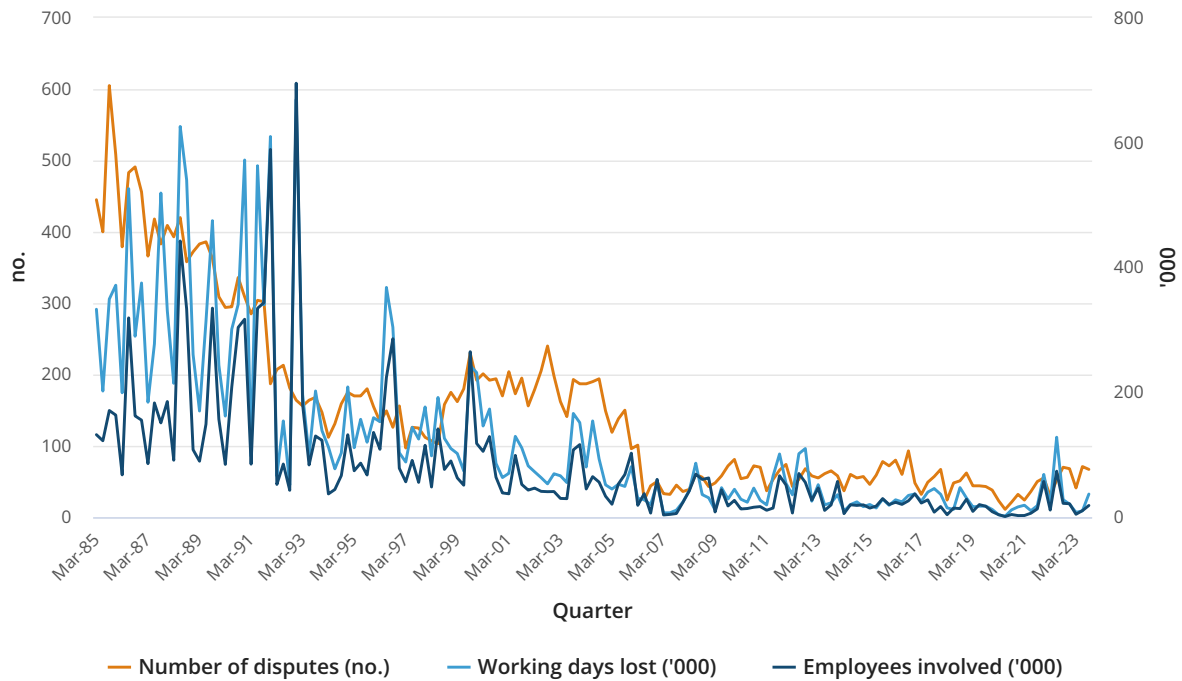
Long-term trends

The level of industrial disputation over recent years is considerably lower than in the 1980's and prior decades.

Industrial disputes in the last 10 years, Australia



Industrial disputes historical series, Australia



Industry

In the September quarter, disputes occurred in eight industries. Over a quarter (27%) of the total working days lost were in the Transport, postal and warehousing industry.

Industrial disputes which occurred during the quarter, industry

	June Quarter 2023		September Quarter 2023	
	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)
Mining				
Coal mining	-	-	np	np
Other mining	np	np	1.5	6.0
Manufacturing				
Metal product etc (a)	0.7	2.2	3.3	10.4
Other manufacturing	np	np	2.4	4.3
Construction	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.6
Transport, postal & warehousing	1.6	2.6	9.8	15.6
Education & training; Health care & social assistance	2.6	0.8	9.1	2.9
Other industries (a)	1.1	0.2	np	np
All industries	10.2	0.8	37.1	2.9

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

np not available for publication but included in totals where applicable, unless otherwise indicated

(a) see Glossary - [Industry \(https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/industrial-disputes-australia-methodology/sep-2023#glossary\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/industrial-disputes-australia-methodology/sep-2023#glossary) - for details of industries included

States and territories

Disputes occurred in eight states and territories in the September quarter, with just over a third (31%) of the total working days lost occurring in New South Wales.

Industrial disputes which occurred during the quarter, states and territories

	June Quarter 2023		September Quarter 2023	
	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)	Working days lost ('000)	Working days lost per thousand employees (no.)
New South Wales	2.5	0.6	11.3	2.8
Victoria	2.7	0.8	8.1	2.4
Queensland	3.2	1.3	8.1	3.2
South Australia	0.5	0.6	6.4	7.4
Western Australia	0.9	0.6	1.9	1.4
Tasmania	np	np	0.6	2.4
Northern Territory	0.1	0.7	0.1	0.5
Australian Capital Territory	np	np	0.6	2.3
Australia	10.2	0.8	37.1	2.9

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Cause of dispute

Most industrial disputes are Enterprise Bargaining (EB) related. Over the past 10 years, disputes over employment conditions have generally been the most prevalent.

EB related issues were the cause of 82% of disputes (47 of 57) which ended in the June quarter 2023.

Cause of dispute for disputes which ended during the quarter

	March Quarter 2023			June Quarter 2023		
	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
EB(a) related						
Remuneration	4	0.2	0.1	10	0.5	0.6
Employment conditions	19	1.7	3.4	37	2.9	6.1
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-EB(a) related						
Remuneration	-	-	-	1	2.1	1.5
Employment conditions	-	-	-	-	-	-
Health and safety	1	1.2	0.8	6	2.4	1.9
Job security	-	-	-	-	-	-
Managerial policy	1	0.3	-	-	-	-
Union issues	1	-	-	-	-	-
Other	1	0.2	0.2	3	1.1	0.7
Total	27	3.5	4.4	57	9.0	10.7

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

(a) Enterprise Bargaining (EB)

Working days lost

Working days lost is a measure of the length of a dispute, relative to the number of employees involved.

Of the 57 disputes which ended in the June quarter, 31 lasted up to and including 1 day. These disputes had:

- 7,300 employees involved; and
- 4,800 working days lost.

Working days lost for disputes which ended during the quarter

	March Quarter 2023			June Quarter 2023		
	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
Up to and including 1 day	18	2.9	1.8	31	7.3	4.8
Over 1 day and up to including 2 days	2	0.2	0.3	12	0.8	1.3
Over 2 and less than 5 days	4	0.4	1.6	6	0.6	2.1
5 and less than 10 days	2	-	0.2	7	np	np
10 days and over	1	0.1	0.6	1	np	np
Total	27	3.5	4.4	57	9.0	10.7

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

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Reason work resumed

The reason work resumed relates to the last day of action taken. Resumption of work can occur without resolution to the issues that triggered the dispute.

There was a pre-determined return to work for 88% of disputes (50 of 57) which ended in the June quarter 2023.

Reason work resumed for disputes which ended during the quarter

	March Quarter 2023			June Quarter 2023		
	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)	Number of disputes (no.)	Employees involved ('000)	Working days lost ('000)
Negotiation without intervention of a third party	1	1.2	0.8	4	0.7	1.0
State legislation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Federal legislation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pre-determined return to work	24	2.2	3.5	50	7.2	9.0
Resumption without negotiation	2	0.2	0.2	3	1.1	0.7
Mediation	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other reasons	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	27	3.5	4.4	57	9.0	10.7

- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

Data downloads

Time Series Spreadsheets

[⬇ Download all \(496.86 KB\)](#)

Table 1: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period

[⬇ Download XLSX](#)
[60.11 KB]

Table 2a: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost, industry

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[55.98 KB]

Table 2b: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost per thousand employees, industry

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[55.63 KB]

Table 3a: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost, states and territories

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[65.37 KB]

Table 3b: Industrial disputes which occurred during the period, working days lost per thousand employees, states and territories

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[64.05 KB]

Table 4a: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, cause of dispute

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[96.54 KB]

Table 4b: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, working days lost per employee involved

↓ [Download XLSX](#)

[65.43 KB]

Table 4c: Industrial disputes which ended during the period, reason work resumed

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[82.43 KB]

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Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6321.0.55.001.

Methodology

[Industrial Disputes, Australia methodology, September 2023](#)